



## THE EAGLE FLIES AGAIN!

It's an exciting era here at Healing Wings as we resurrect The Eagle, a newsletter created by residents and staff at the centre, and a staple over the span of two decades. A platform used to share news and updates with families and former residents, The Eagle's purpose is to strengthen the connection between those within the Healing Wings program and those supporting them. It serves as an opportunity for families to understand the true nitty-gritty of this program from the perspective of the residents who live it, and also showcases the creative talent that is ever-present on this big little farm.

As a former Adult Centre Female (ACF) resident, I can truly attest to the power of this program, unexplainable apart from God. I was a slave to alcohol and drugs, and I thought there was no way out. Until I arrived here, almost three years ago. I didn't know what I was getting myself into, but whatever it was, was far beyond my wildest dreams.

And to be involved in this project, that satisfies both my passion for Healing Wings and my passion for writing and anything journalistic, is truly such an honour. I'm looking forward to seeing how The Eagle grows as time goes on but for now, please be patient with us as we find our groove, starting with this pilot edition. We are also open to comments and suggestions, so please don't hesitate to contact us should you feel compelled to.

Here's to the journey, and wherever it may take us.

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'For I know the plans that I have for you,' says the Lord, 'plans for peace and well-being and not for disaster, to give you a future and a hope.'  
Jeremiah 29:11



# (NOT SO AMATEUR) WRITING BY RESIDENTS

## When to End Things

Six years old, strong and bold, with mom and dad,  
Always happy, barely sad.  
A few years later things go down, slowly but surely,  
Starting to drown.  
Fights arise, then you start to hear my sad soft cries.  
Time starts to fly, got dropped off at school,  
Not a single goodbye.  
My tears start falling, I can hear my young self calling,  
'Nicky where you going?  
Look at all the bad you're sowing.'  
Starting to end things, no more good beginnings.  
A few years later,  
all I'm looking down at my pale white skin,  
Where'd this all begin?  
Goosebumps all over from my ice-cold words,  
Words filled with anger, sadness and pain from an  
Endless cycle I cannot contain.  
I walk towards my mirror, looking up I see skin and bone,  
Wishing I'd turn to only ash and stone.  
A few years later, all I'm good for is drugs and alcohol,  
Always blurred vision leading me to trip and then fall.  
Addicted and in pain, no more good things to gain.  
Oh my dear Nicky, where's your good selfless heart?  
Your giant ego just ripped it apart.  
One drug-filled evening, you almost stopped breathing,  
Then man saved you, all pale and blue, 'Why am I here?',  
Full of anger and fear.  
Slowly closing my eyes and... it's one year later.  
Now I'm on the right track and God has my back,  
In Healing Wings my inner angel sings her sweetest song,  
Where she'll belong.  
My parents' daughter is back,  
And she has closed the crack in her poor heart  
That has been ripped apart.  
Finally she can look forward to what this life brings,  
As she no longer wants to end things.  
**NICOLENE BRITZ (Youth Centre Girls)**

## The Moment Everything Chained

Like a ripple in the sea,  
A dream of something meant to be.  
A wave of wonder caught desire,  
A thought is sparked like raging fire.  
Should a cool wind wash away,  
The scorching heat of desert's day.  
Should energy, time and matter,  
Be connected to the latter.  
How should love play a role...  
Something pretty for the soul?  
Make it beautiful like a flower!  
But shall it yield, my true power?  
Put in place, a mountain of pain,  
Could it be climbed to find true gain?  
An ocean of waste floats in the water,  
Lambs shall be sent to the slaughter,  
A creation so tame, yet wild.  
A Spirit that's like a child.  
A hundred years shall meet the grave,  
A life so real they'll want to save...  
My hands will be there to hold you strong.  
My light will guide you from the wrong.  
My eyes will be there to guide you still,  
I am your creator, I am your will.  
**JACK VOLWYN (Adult Centre Males)**

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Finally she can look forward to what this life brings, as she no longer wants to end things.

# 2022 SO FAR...

## FAREWELL, THELMA!

On 9 March, we hosted a farewell dinner in honour of the lovely and beloved Thelma. This was undoubtedly a bittersweet moment for us all, after ten(unsure) years of sharing her love with us and her dedication to her job, our residents and helping others.

We are incredibly excited that Thelma has the opportunity to expand her wings and dedicate her next few years to studying what she loves further, yet saddened as we will miss her dearly, not only for what she did but for who she is. Although by profession Thelma is a nurse, in her time spent with us she became a friend, mentor and sister to all those whom she encountered. Her bold yet soft and loving nature will be sorely missed. - **Noluthando Mthoba (Admin)**



## CR TESTIMONY EVENING

Five of our team members were blessed to join hands with a Celebrate Recovery group at Communio church to share our testimonies.

It was an incredible honour to break bread around a table with like-minded individuals with a common goal - to come to know Christ and through Him find healing.

After sharing a meal, we gathered together to worship and then were given the floor to share how God has worked in our lives. We were reminded from the response of that group, just how important it is to keep sharing, keep serving and keep sewing hope in to the lives of others! - **Zante Botes (F&B)**



# Wedding Bells

**A short story about the first day of forever for Pierre and Zante.**

In A Letter to His Brother, By Vincent Van Gogh

**“I want to paint men and women with that something of the eternal which the halo used to symbolize ... to express the love of two lovers by a wedding of two complementary colours, their mingling and apposition, the mysterious vibration of kindred tones. To express the thought of a brow by the radiance of a light tone against a sombre background. To express hope by some star, the eagerness of a soul by a sunset radiance.”**

An amateur artist herself, the bride was, as befits the occasion, a picture. Within another picture, set within yet another. And I can relate to the desire of Van Gogh above, to capture emotions of love and tenderness in paint, as I hope to do so with words.

Unassuming, just like the couple of the moment, the venue unfolded as one walked through the gates, to reveal a quietly glorious backdrop for both the moving human and the stationary décor elements of their sacred event.

Many family hands had made light work of an exultation of floral arrangements as generous as the earth itself, which lay in vast tumbles over tables and adored every available corner. The effect of their aromatic presence was multifarious and can best be described as an experience in forest bathing. Muted woodland hues of sage, dove grey, moss and eucalypt echoed tones found in the escarpment the couple calls home, and handsome leaves propelled their signature scents liberally into the air all night. A dashing best man and most elegant maid of honour clad in tints of the same gentle colours, brought the wonder of ceremony and a sense of deep friendship to things.

And then finally, the frame of our portrait: the love of this couple for one another. Which radiance shone from the first moment we glimpsed Zante, and Pierre battled a sudden, unwelcome dilemma in the eye area.

Zante astonished as a modern bride, splendid in a white pantsuit, complete with deep pockets, which was lovingly crafted by a local seamstress. Fine white lace detailed the bodice and her characteristically long, thick hair nestled with ease in a gently braided half-up style with soft twists around her face. Pierre complimented their unconventional sensibility with a light-hearted look in his almond-hued shorts, suspenders, and classy leather belt.

Pastor took us through a few thought-provoking considerations in wisdom and love before concluding the official side of things by pronouncing the new Mr and Mrs Botes husband and wife.

A flurry of professional photo-taking ensued, complete at one point, with the man up a ladder for pictorial perspective! After which guests mingled in the glorious fading light and twinkle of candles. Miraculously, a torrential downpour that had been predicted, was absent following keen prayers answered by a loving God and so that one sweet, late summer's evening will forever be remembered for its utter perfection.

While most wedding planners today might reach for professional caterers to ensure everyone walks away customarily overfed, the fabulous mother of the groom stepped into this role and tables were laden with platter after platter of traditional roast lamb, rice, potatoes, vegetables, and gravy, to mention but a few choices. A delicate cake the colour of toasted almonds and a sprinkle of tiny snowy doughnuts offered impeccable satisfaction with coffee at the end.

The reception was a blast – complete with friend-turned-wedding singer, emotional speeches, undercover talent for great comedy and much variety in style and skill level on display on the dance floor.

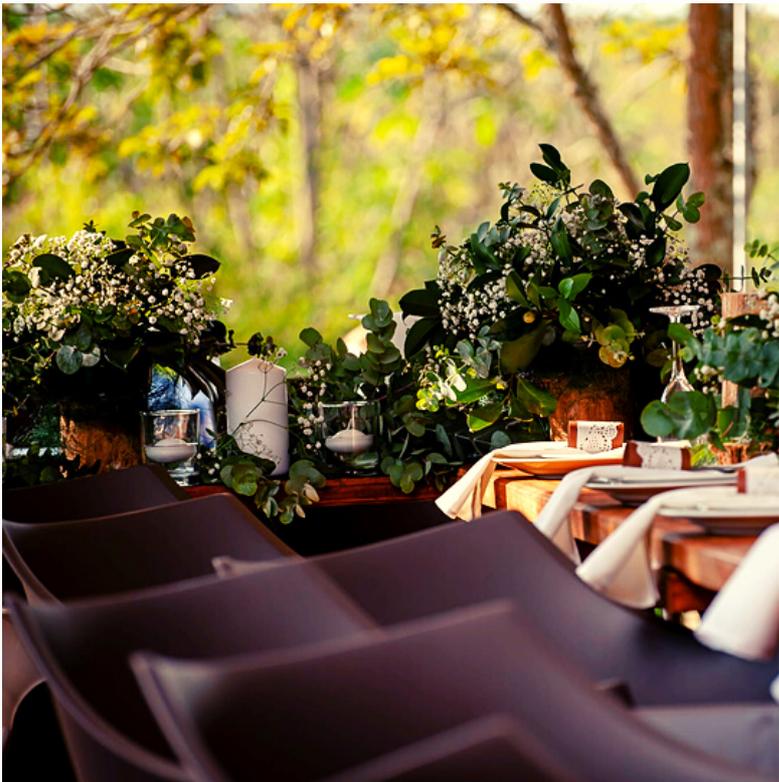
In the book of their shared life, Zante and Pierre had come to chapter one, they had come past the prologue and introduction pages, and they scripted that night a title and content for the beginning of the tale. With witnesses in abundance to their separate lives through both hardships and victories, they could stand proud of themselves and proud of the other, for such a start. What a testimony, and what a couple.

As friend of both Zante and Pierre, the terrifying privilege of writing about their day, was as hard as only these things can be. Because despite my life-long love of words, I was not sure I would find the ones I required to adequately describe this event, and the two people it was all about. But suffice it to say, that they speak for themselves as two selfless, kind, generous people who found each other and a jet-black puppy, and the rest is beautiful history.

Now, for the babies...

- **Anke Swart (Management)**

# Z&P Wedding Pics



# WELCOME BABY JACKSON!

All dressed in blue and white, the Staff of Healing Wings came together to celebrate new beginnings of our beloved couple, Natasha (Equine Centre) and David Lacey (HR Manager). With tasty burgers, beautifully baked cupcakes and of course, a few baby-bump games, we had an absolute ball of a time in honour of little Jackson Lacey.

Tash and David welcomed Jackson to the world on 17 May 2022 and we are so happy that he's a part of the Healing Wings family. - Chevy O'Regan (YCG Counsellor)



# PROGRAMME UPDATE

## YCB

Looking at the Youth Centre Boys (YCB) statistics for the past year, we are satisfied that the Centre has been able to save and improve many young boys' lives from the struggles of addiction and behavioural issues through guidance and unconditional support in their recovery journey. Not only do we focus on formal therapy, we also spend lots of time doing fun outdoor activities. These outdoor activities bring the whole YCB community together. The boys participate with impressive enthusiasm. Here are some of the highlights for the year 2022:

- Rehab Athletics - There was great excitement on this day, each boy ran, sprint, performed high jump and shot put and swam. Special thanks to our volunteer Mikael Jappie for making this day a success.
- Afternoon Boot camp with Chef John - Exercise improves mental health and sleep patterns, reduces cravings, and regains physical strength. A healthier mind in a healthy body.
- Soccer match. Our boys always give 110% when it comes to a soccer match and they play their best.

- **Kiki Mswane (Youth Centre Manager)**



## YCG

To put it bluntly, YCG is no walk in the park. Let's start with the dreaded beginning. Waking up... and I don't mean at the usual 11am side-bed-roll-out, I mean at the crack of dawn! 5am guys! Then, and yes it gets worse, we have to... clean. You heard me, CLEAN. What a drag.

I have to say, breakfast is quite rewarding. Especially, on the best day of all Flapjack Friday! After dishes are done and the house is tidy, off we walk to school. "Wait, what... Walk?" you're probably thinking. Yeah buddy, W A L K. Walk. I mean, I get that it's all "healthy" and all, and all the adults are saying "You'll thank yourself for this in 20 years", but I mean surely walking so early in the morning can't be legal? It's ridiculous to think that all that fresh air, the misty tree lining landscape and the sun rising above the rocky-mountain pouring out can actually be good for you? Then it's school. Ah school, a word I used to dread saying and dread even more participating in.

After school we sit down as a community to have lunch, all taking turns at guessing what is on the menu today.

Could it be the boerewors rolls with those crunchy caramelized onions and creamy potatoes? Or maybe, the crumbed mozzarella and pomegranate salad, with the apple crumble and ice cream? Now, the afternoons are different everyday. Nothing too special to be honest. Well, except horse riding on Mondays with Angie... and

I do enjoy Church on Wednesdays, and football on Tuesdays and Thursdays... and the didactic groups... and the Art Groups with DJ and Chevy... oh and also the life story and incidence presentations, I just did mine recently, so I can give my first feedback! I guess the afternoons aren't SO bad... I guess, none of it really is so bad. It's just so "structured" and "organized". And, if I am honest... I actually, maybe, just maybe... like it.

- **Chevy O'Regan (YCG Counsellor)**



The ACF community currently has 20 residents and four of them are 18 years old, which is uncommon for the Adult Centre. The current age is between 18-46 and the majority of them are in their early twenties, even so, I believe the community balances itself out. The young ones learn from the older resident and vice versa. The ladies are engaged in work therapy Mondays, Wednesdays, Fridays and every fourth Sunday of the month. The work allocation or work therapy consists of kitchen team, horse team, house team and garden team. They also attend group sessions in the afternoons like art groups, writing groups, didactic, social groups, CR groups, to name a few. They go on hikes with staff members, and we recently started going on sunrise hikes every second week on a Friday morning. The majority of the ladies love the hike, though not everyone is keen to wake up early for it. They also play games like Minute-To-Win-It, sports like soccer, night games and board games.

In April, we struggled with gossip and lots of unhealthy conversation and lack of boundaries, which led to an unhealthy culture and this was solved by putting the community on community boundaries for a week. During the week they were allowed to write each other up for incidents happening in the community (black book), instead of relying on the leaders to do it. We told them it is not the job of leadership and staff to always address issues as everyone has a voice and change needs to happen from within the community by everyone taking responsibility for the community's culture. At the end of the week, we had a debrief with them, which was followed by an Amnesty session where they were encouraged to speak up about their struggles and come clean about rules that they have broken. The aim was to give them a clean slate as at the end of the session they all received grace for the consequences they had accumulated.

The community we currently have is mostly new residents that are less than three months old in the programme. We have one volunteer and one responsible, who is a resident leader. We have seven female staff members, one of which is our beloved Tash who is currently on maternity leave. Our team members wear different heads during the day, Angelique and Tash are split between Equine and social, Noluthando and Rumbi are split between OPS and Social, Zante is split between the Food and Beverage and Social. Anke is our program manager and forms part of the management team. Promise is strictly social. - **Promise Nhlabathi (ACF Social Worker)**

Our Male Community is like any other community. It has its ups and downs. At this moment, the main thing the men do struggle with is boundaries. They mostly struggle with this with one another. We are in the process of explaining and teaching them how this benefits them in the long term.

The males are there for each other. They do support each other and are practising compassion. From our older residents to our youngest, there is a bond. At the moment our community is very young but strong as well.

The community does sunrise walks every second Friday morning, and this brings them together. They also engage with the YCB by playing sports tournaments with them, which proves to be an exciting activity.

- **Pierre Botes (ACM Counsellor)**



# Past Resident Testimony: Robyn De Jager

When I arrived at Healing Wings, I was bankrupt, in all dimensions - financially, spiritually, emotionally and physically. I didn't want to live and my first thought when I woke up in the morning was "I hate my life and I want to die".

I quickly accepted that I was not getting out of Healing Wings. It took me longer to accept that I needed to be there, but eventually, I did. This is probably where the real growth started. I didn't always agree with Healing Wings and the programme - sometimes I vehemently disagreed. But at the end of the day, you get out what you put in, and I realised it was entirely up to me to make it work. And then at some point, through being required to stay alive and do things, as per the program, and because of God too, I started to want to live again. I noticed one day that I woke up thinking more along the lines of "let's do this!" than "I want to die", which I must say was a marked improvement.

I think that long-term treatment is a privilege needed by many, but afforded to so few. I do feel privileged to have been able to spend 16 months at Healing Wings, and I'm glad I put my all into it, because that's what made all the difference. Post Healing Wings I came to stay at St Georges, where I am now volunteering. I have a job that I like that treats me well, I have almost paid off alot my debt, I am healthy and I've never been closer to God. I've built a life I enjoy in a very short period of time and for that I am extremely grateful. -

**Robyn De Jager**



**AND THAT'S ALL FOR NOW, FOLKS!  
THANK YOU SO MUCH FOR TAKING THE TIME OUT TO READ  
OUR NEWSLETTER, THE EAGLE.  
LOOKING FORWARD TO SHARING MORE OF THE HEALING  
WINGS HEART WITH YOU IN OUR NEXT EDITION!**